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The Declining Market for Unionization, 1978

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The Declining Market for Unionization

By Ronald Berenbeim

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Union Growth and Market Priorities

Union membership levels, like earnings figures for the buggy-whip industry, are not what they used to be. Even union leadership concedes, and professes concern, that the percentage of the organizable work force represented by unions has fallen. From one in four at the beginning of the decade, it was down to one in five in 1976. And it is more difficult than at any point in recent history to interest those who are not members in unionism.

Numerous explanations are offered by observers, academicians, management and unions for the decline. They include:

- The new work force has values and goals not understood, let alone appreciated, by most unions. Indeed, unions are often regarded as part of the establishment challenged by important elements, especially minorities, of the new work force.
- Management is smarter than it was in the decades of great union expansion and knows better how to respond to employees' needs and wants. Company efforts to provide both financial and non-financial benefits often lead rather than lag major union initiatives.
- The political and legal climate has foreclosed the wide opportunities for organization that characterized the "golden years" of organization, 1935-1947. Unions have been playing catch-up in a less favorable climate.
- Public attitudes toward unions and unionization have changed. It is getting harder for many people to sympathize with workers who make \$8 to \$9 dollars an hour while receiving generous benefit packages. Residual sympathies are further neutralized when it is learned that many of the most highly paid union members are public employees whose pay and fringes come at the taxpayers' expense.
- Union leadership is old and tired and wants no threats from an influx of new members that might endanger its control. If anything, in some unions the members are more opposed than the leaders to the inclusion of workers in new areas. They feel this might dilute their influence with the leadership and push services for members in different industrial codes.

Competition to achieve the longest, most technical and definitive test for union decline is well under way. A battery of computers and mathematical formulas has been pressed into service to this end. Undoubtedly they will have conclusions in the next few years. Although they may not be inclusive, they will be something to the effect that union membership has declined because there is less of it. Union leaders who will be asked to comment on all this will in all probability, express the view that current developments are most regrettable—even alarming.

At this point, however, no survey of the problem has submitted the question of membership and organizational decline to the rigors of ordinary market analysis. The union movement is not so very different from an industry with services to sell. Corporate planning for growth has come increasingly to rely on assessing the company's market position—high or low—in terms of the growth potential of the market—high or low. What results is a strategy that focuses energies and priorities on markets with high growth potential.

What is avoided is the development of a marketing plan that focuses energies on diminishing markets. Nonetheless, that seems to be the union strategy. All but a few enterprising unions have locked themselves into their traditional jurisdictions which, for the most part, are low-growth employment sectors. Moreover, the union movement as a whole has failed to provide the impetus for new unions, which, in the absence of initiative by established labor organizations, could achieve a realignment consistent with current market segmentation.

A look at the diagram of union membership con-

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centration, broken down by economic sector, makes this clearer.

Employment Growth by Industry and Level of Union Concentration, 1966 to 1976

Employment Growth	High (above 45%)	Low (below 15%)
High (above 25% increase in employment)	State and local government	Services Finance Trade
Low (below 25% increase in employment)	Mining Construction Transportation Federal Government Manufacturing	

Union Market Saturation Level (Percentage of workers who are union members)

Union membership is high in only one of the areas that has made substantial employment gains in the last decade—state and local government. In all other major growth categories—services, trade and finance—union membership is under 15 percent. In fact, it is under 10 percent for this group as a whole. Conversely, the classifications with high union concentration (above 45 percent) other than state-local government (Federal Government, construction, transportation and public utilities, manufacturing and mining) have achieved little or no employment growth. Significantly, manufacturing, the critical area of union emphasis, is the only category that has actually *lost* jobs.

In fact, those unions with sizable membership gains in the last decade help to document this assertion for they are among the few labor organizations positioned in growth segments:

(1) Retail Clerks—trade (2) Service Employees International Union—services (3) American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers; United Federation of Teachers—state and local government. Other unions with substantial membership increases in recent years have achieved this objective through methods analogous to corporate growth:

(1) The Teamsters—diversification, and (2) The Steelworkers—merger with a smaller organization positioned in a growth sector (Allied and Technical Workers—trade).

However, despite loss of members, unions are still expending considerable energy on organization. One good indication of this in the private sector is the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) union organizational elections. Each of these, however small the bargaining unit, represents some level of enterprise by union officials because of the paperwork required by the NLRB and the demands of a campaign to inform and contact the electorate. By the same token, each organizational drive shows a significant degree of interest on the part of employees, as at least 30 percent of them must be persuaded to sign organizational cards before an election petition can be filed with the NLRB.

The record for 1977 shows that unions were working hard to attract new members. The NLRB conducted more than 8,600 union organizational elections; unions won 48.2 percent of them. The number of employees covered, roughly 527,000, was not great by the standards of 1935-1947—but it was up 75,000 from 1976.

However, when this effort is analyzed in terms of market priorities, an astute market analyst would not be surprised at the deterioration of union membership. What shows up is clear: Unions have been dragging their past traditions, their past jurisdictional agreements, their past failures, and their past successes into their current organizing efforts. The union movement's concentration has been on industries and geographic areas where unions already occupy a comfortable position but which are low growth, or no growth, in terms of employment.

In sum, most union organizing efforts have been expended in shrinking employment markets and this undoubtedly is a factor in their lack of growth in recent years. Examination of each growth and no-growth industrial segment—in terms of union membership concentration and organizational activity—follows.

GROWTH AREAS: HIGH UNION CONCENTRATION

State and Local Government

State and local government is the only high-growth market segment in which unions have a large market share. Moreover, unlike the Federal Government, the job market continues to grow, and the union membership levels have been increasing during most of the last decade.

In the decade 1966-1976, state and local governments increased their employment 48.5 percent (nearly 4 million jobs)—second only to services.

As state and local bargaining units do not fall within the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Act, it is difficult to assess union organizing objectives and the success they have had in achieving them. Moreover, criteria for recognizing a bargaining agent vary widely from one jurisdiction to another so that no uniform guidelines exist, as in the case of the National Labor Relations Act, for measuring union effectiveness. Finally, as in the case of federal employee unions, there is a discrepancy between representation and actual membership because of the lack, in most instances, of union security clauses.

Despite these qualifications, union membership growth in the state-and-local government area has been impressive. When last tabulated, the union market share was still less than one-half the work force in this segment. Thus, a large market remains unpenetrated in a growth area in which unions have, thus far, been quite successful. Table 1 shows the percent of full-time employees organized by function and level of government.

Table 1: Percent of Full-time Employees Organized by Function and Level of Government, 1975

Function	*State and Local*	*State*	*Local*
Total	50	40	54
Selected Functions			
Education	58	29	65
Teachers	69	33	73
Other	37	26	43
Highways	46	59	34
Public welfare	39	38	40
Hospitals	42	50	33
Police protection	54	47	55
Local fire protection	72	—	72
Sanitation other than sewerage	48	—	48
All other functions	37	38	37

Source: *Census Bureau Survey of Governmental Employment*, 1975. (Percentages rounded)

Although unions have enjoyed a consistent pattern of success in the state-local government area in the ten-year period 1966-1976, more recent figures indicate that overall strength may have reached a plateau from which further improvement is difficult. It is a high level, but it may indicate that gains in state-local government will not offset losses elsewhere in the future.

GROWTH—BUT LOW UNION CONCENTRATION

Finance

Finance is a growth segment with large units, potential union appeal, and less than one percent of employees represented by unions. The unions that traditionally operate within this jurisdiction have not been successful in marketing unionization. The few recent successes for unions in this area have been Teamster and Independent efforts: The Allstate Agents Association, a local independent union, organized a Long Island office of the company winning a unit of 650 employees; and the Teamsters organized a 2,000-employee unit in the Hospital Services Corporation, Chicago, Illinois.

Unions active in the area have compiled a discouraging record. The organizing manual of the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) acknowledges this and says on the subject:

"At this stage of our development and in accordance with our experience, we find that employees in banks, insurance companies and brokerage firms are more difficult to convince of the advantages of collective bargaining and subsequently, are not as receptive to organizational campaigns as is true of office and clerical employees in manufacturing and production industries."[1]

Nonetheless, the OPEIU periodically marks banks as an inviting target. Attacking low wage scales and automation threats, and noting the widespread unionization of bank employees in other regions of the world, the union's president, Howard Coughlin, writing in the organization's newspaper, *White Collar* (March, 1974), urged that "the only recourse for banking employees is to unionize now." Yet NLRB records for 1977 show that the union won only one election in banks during 1977. Moreover, it lost a 223-person unit, which could have been a base for expansion, at the American Stock Exchange.

OPEIU's experience was no worse than the Insurance Workers International Union (AFL-CIO).

[1]Office and Professional Employees International Union, *Organizational Manual*.

Its 1977 activity was relatively high; but in 52 elections it won 26 and gained 370 members. The average unit won was 14.2, less than one-third the nationwide average of 48.7. Moreover, the average unit lost was 16.7, indicating little success even in interesting larger groups to the point where there is an election.

Services

This job market made the decade's greatest gain (5.4 million or 56.5 percent). Services is a broad industry group which includes hotels, data processors, repair establishments, private health and educational institutions, entertainment and amusement enterprises, and professional employees in law, engineering and other fields. Additionally, the service category includes maintenance workers in buildings and apartment houses. Nearly one job in five (18.4 percent) is in this category and, given the developments of the last 40 years, services may soon be the largest category in the job market.

Overall union strength is weak in services (under 15 percent), but the category is so broad that unions are strong in certain segments and almost nonexistent in others. In the hotel area, for example, unions have, historically, had a strong position but their membership figures are hurt by the transient nature of the work force.

Similarly, unions have always been strong in entertainment, but are losing this position for the same reasons that construction unions are declining: a proliferation of double-breasted contracts drawing upon a competent pool of non-union labor, and an inability, because of this labor pool, to convince new producers that only union people have the requisite qualifications to do the work.

Unions have, however, had great success in the health-care field since the National Labor Relations Act was amended in 1974 to bring nonprofit hospitals under the Act's jurisdiction. Unions and professional societies may receive additional legislative impetus from a bill introduced by Representative Frank Thompson in 1977, which would broaden the scope of the Act's definition to include "any intern, resident, fellow, or other such trainee in a professional training program who is receiving a stipend or compensation with such program." The bill is awaiting a final vote in the House of Representatives.

Whether hospital residents will choose a traditional form of labor organization if allowed to organize remains an open question. If other professionals, such as engineers, are any guide, the residents are more likely to favor a professional association approach. Some engineering groups are courted by, or even affiliated with, national unions such as the UAW and Teamsters. However, many, such as the Seattle Professional Engineering Employees Association (which represents 10,000 Boeing employees) remain resolutely unaffiliated.[2]

Education, even in the private sector, continues to be one of the most encouraging areas for unions. They won 47 elections in that area during fiscal 1977 (a 58 percent win ratio) and won in units averaging 92.7 employees. No union dominated this field in the private sector. The Office and Professional Employees International Union, however, waged the year's most publicized campaign in education for a 2,845-person unit at Yale University, losing by a close margin.

There is some indication that unions are attempting to appeal to new groups—museums, for example, where a single effort proved successful in 1977. The union involved was independent. It was not the first time a union attempted to organize museum employees. The most publicized was at the Museum of Modern Art in 1974. Commenting on the formation of that independent association (Professional Association of the Museum of Modern Art—PASTA/MOMA), Blanchette Rockefeller, the museum's president, observed to the *New York Times*: "I didn't like seeing educated girls acting like miners. Actually miners would probably behave better." (February 5, 1974).

A more traditional service area, automobile repair, long a target of union organizers, continued to be a high-energy, low-yield proposition. Unions won less than 40 percent of their elections for an average unit size under 20.

Overall, union organizing efforts in the services area during 1977 were consistent with the segment's increasing share of the labor market. Unions participated in 1,635 elections in 1977 and won 838 of them for a winning percentage of 51.3 percent; better than their overall percentage of election wins for the year. Additionally, the average unit won was 55.6, which was also better than average. However, nearly two-thirds of the over 46,000 new union members in the service sector were health employees. Without this newly legislated opportunity, unions would have fared poorly in services. Table 2 shows the union performance in the various branches of the services classification.

[2]Eileen Hoffman, *Unionization of Professional Societies*. The Conference Board, Report No. 690, 1976, p. 45.

Table 2: Union Election Record in Services by Category, 1977

Industrial Group	*Won-Lost*	*Percentage*	*Average Unit Size*
Hotels..........	41-77	35	35
Personal services	21-31	40	34
Automotive repair	53-88	38	19
Motion pictures..	10-7	59	28
Amusement and recreation.....	24-16	60	51
Health services..	408-338	55	73
Educational services.......	47-34	58	93
Membership organizations..	15-10	60	20
Business services	174-172	50	34
Miscellaneous repair services.	19-16	54	29
Museums.......	1-0	100	15
Legal services...	2-0	100	30
Social services...	18-5	78	47
Miscellaneous services.......	5-3	63	16
Total...........	838-797	51	56

Source: *Forty-Second Annual Report of the National Labor Relations Board,* 1977. (Percentage and unit size rounded)

Wholesale and Retail Trade

Aside from manufacturing, which it trails by less than two percentage points, wholesale and retail trade is the largest segment of the job market, accounting for nearly one out of every four positions. The sector has had modest growth since 1966, expanding at a slightly greater rate than the job economy as a whole. Thus, it is the decline of manufacturing rather than the expansion of trade which now has it challenging manufacturing for the largest share of the job market.

Unions clearly recognize the importance of this classification. In 1977, the NLRB conducted 1,931 elections in this area, more than 20 percent of all representation contests. Union performance, however, was not impressive. Unions won only 811 elections for a win ratio of 42 percent, worse than their performance in other categories. Moreover, the average unit won was only 26 employees, almost half the average for other elections. The Teamsters accounted for nearly 40 percent of all elections won by unions and, in the area of wholesale trade, Teamster victories were over 60 percent of the total. Table 3 shows the union election records for trade in 1977, and indicates the level of Teamster activity in each division.

Close analysis for a two-month period shows that nearly three-fourths of all elections in retail trade occurred in one of three industrial groups: (1) food stores, (2) automobile dealerships and service stations, and (3) restaurants. Unions expended little effort in such other trade areas as apparel and furniture.

Table 3: Union Election Performance in Trade, 1977

Industry Group	*Won-Lost*	*Percentage Won*	*New Unit Size*	*Teamster Percentage Won*
Wholesale	285-433	39	22	61
Retail	526-677	44	28	26
Total	811-1120	42	26	38

Source: *Forty-Second Annual Report of the National Labor Relations Board,* 1977. (Percentage and unit size rounded)

In wholesale trade, union performance was considerably better in nondurable goods, where unions won slightly less than half their elections, than in durable goods, where only a third of their efforts were successful. Table 4 shows the distribution of union election efforts in various industrial groups for 1977.

NO-GROWTH SECTORS

Shifting from growth to little or no-growth sectors, the picture is one of great union organizing, without tremendous success. Take the Federal Government for example:

Federal Government

Sizable though the Federal Government may be, its share of the job market actually *declined* between 1966 and 1976 from one job in twenty-five to one job in thirty-three. Looking at segments of the federal work force, 1975 Civil Service figures show that unions had bargaining rights for about 1.2 million, which included over half of all federal white-collar workers, and roughly 85 percent of blue-collar and postal workers.[3] However, in the absence of security clauses to enforce maintenance of membership in federal contracts, estimates put union membership at between 50 and 55 percent of all federal employees.

[3]Solomon Barkin, "Diversity in Industrial Relations Patterns." *Labor Law Journal,* November, 1976, p. 683.

Table 4: Union Election Activity in Trade by Industrial Group, Selected Two Months, 1977

Industrial Group	*Total* Won-Lost	*Total* Pct. Won	*AFL-CIO or IND.* Won-Lost	*AFL-CIO or IND.* Pct. Won	*Teamsters* Won-Lost	*Teamsters* Pct. Won
Retail Trade (Total)	68-77	47	40-41	49	28-36	43
Hardware, garden, etc...	5-3	63	1-1	50	4-2	67
General merchandise	6-3	67	4-2	67	2-1	67
Food stores ...	18-20	47	16-16	50	2-4	33
Auto dealers, service stations.....	17-23	43	7-7	50	10-16	39
Apparel and accessories .	0-1	-0-	0-1	-0-	—	—
Furniture......	6-6	50	2-3	40	4-3	57
Restaurants...	7-21	25	7-15	32	0-6	-0-
Miscellaneous retail	9-9	50	3-5	38	6-4	60
Wholesale Trade (Total)	38-58	40	9-15	38	29-43	40
Durable goods .	20-39	34	4-11	27	16-28	36
Nondurable goods	18-19	49	5-4	56	13-15	46

Source: *National Labor Relations Board Election Report:* The Conference Board.

Unionization of federal employees has been advantageous to the labor movement. It has provided new members and per capita revenue at a time when overall figures are declining. And the unions representing federal employees have developed lobbying skills in securing their objectives from Congress that can be used by the union movement as a whole. But because the federal employees' unions do not have union security, do not bargain collectively in the classical sense, and, of course, have no strike weapon, it is questionable whether they add strength to the union movement comparable to that which might be generated by union growth in other employment areas.

Construction

Construction, like the Federal Government, also represents a relatively small and declining percentage of the work force (less than one job in twenty). In 1974, about 75 percent of all construction workers were unionized. All indications are that this percentage is dropping.

However, construction unions, unlike federal employee organizations, have not been active in recruitment. Union emphasis in construction, as in certain other industries organized along similar lines (such as entertainment), has been to limit employer hiring options to their members, and to keep the membership rolls low enough so that there is enough work to go around. Thus, in the past, construction unions have served a personnel function in developing skilled labor, servicing existing contracts, and marketing their services not to potential members but to employers.

Construction today (particularly that of private homes) is increasingly nonunion. Construction companies are relying on their own resources to develop skilled labor and many use a so-called "double-breasted" approach that enables them to maintain their current contracts with unions while operating subsidiaries that do nonunion work.

Prospects that organizational efforts will increase if labor law reform changes representation procedures are not likely to affect construction. Both John Dunlop, a former Secretary of Labor, and F. Ray Marshall, the post's current occupant, think it unlikely. Robert Georgine, president of The AFL-CIO Building Trades Department, concedes:

"By the nature of the construction industry, the employees are there for a relatively brief time. There might not be time for an election and there would hardly be time for negotiating a contract which, even if negotiated, could be moot by the time it was signed.

"There also would be all kinds of difficult problems about the bargaining unit. In general, the situation has very little promise for organizing purposes."

At the same time, a union attorney put it more crassly:

"Regardless of the Taft-Hartley changes that may be enacted, I find today that many union officers' performance is conditioned by their having attained a measure of satisfaction in their lives. They're sufficiently successful that they're not going to discommode themselves for something like an organizing campaign. That's too tough duty."

Another point of view shows that not everyone figures the unions have given up on construction organizing. The chief executive of a national construction company cautions:

"This industry is going to make the same mistake it has made repeatedly by downgrading the unions. I say: don't underestimate the business agents.

"The business agent's survival is involved here. If you see your membership going down, down, down, and you see your job on the line, you better do something. Furthermore, there are a lot of smart business agents out there around the country."[4]

In any event, total employment in construction is not numerically significant, nor is there any prospect that it could be. Yet construction illustrates the union attitudes that have contributed to a decline of membership and influence.

Manufacturing

An even more cogent example of the intensity of the union commitment to standstill is manufacturing. Manufacturing, like services, has a broad range of employment groups—many of which are heavily unionized and some of which are not. It differs from services in that overall union membership is quite high (roughly half the work force), but employment is declining. Indeed, it seems possible that, in the near future, manufacturing will cease to provide the largest number of jobs in the economy.

With certain significant exceptions, unions have a strong position in the industries that comprise manufacturing (see Table 5). Judging from existing membership ratios, the major opportunity areas for unions are newspapers, commercial printing, and household furniture. Data for 1977 indicate that unions recognize the potential of these segments and are working hard to improve their position.

Of the two groups (newspapers and commercial printing are one classification in NLRB data), by far the better performance for 1977 was in furniture. Unions won 64 out of 137 elections—a percentage of 46.7. The Teamsters accounted for 18 of the wins. More importantly, the average unit won was 87.4 employees, over one-and-one-half times the overall average for 1977. Substantial effort was concentrated on North Carolina, the state with the largest concentration of furniture workers. Even though the Carpenters Union lost all ten of these elections, the units were large and the decisions close. Both are factors that portend continued efforts in this potentially large market.

Among newspapers and printing, and publishing, there were more elections, but less success. Unions won 143 out of 319 elections, or 44.8 percent. The average unit size, however, was only 40.8. Teamster participation in this area was much lower—roughly one out of six units won went to the Teamsters.

[4]Bureau of National Affairs, *Daily Labor Report,* January 19, 1978.

Table 5: Top Ten Manufacturing Employers and Degree of Unionization (Number of Employees).

Rank (Number of Employees)	*Group*	*Percent Unionized*
1	Steel	50-75
2	Newspapers	25-50
3	Commercial printing	25-50
4	Electronic systems and equipment	50-75
5	Electronic components	50-75
6	Household furniture	25-50
7	Automobiles	75-100
8	Steel casings	50-75
9	Paper and paperboard	50-75
10	Aluminum	50-75

Sources: 1978 U.S. Industrial Outlook, Department of Commerce; *Directory of National Unions and Employee Associations.* U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin #1937, 1977.

In the election reports analyzed closely by The Conference Board, the established unions in the field (Teamsters, Graphic Arts, Printing and Graphics, and Newspaper Guild) won only six out of thirty-six elections, during the two months surveyed by The Conference Board, and were outperformed by unions not especially active in the area (which won six out of thirteen contests). One of these unions was the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), which won the largest unit—172 employees.

Geographically, efforts focused on states where unions are heavily concentrated (California—13, New York—6, Ohio—6, and Pennsylvania—4). Attempts in California were more numerous and successful than elsewhere in the country; unions won six out of thirteen elections in that state.

The intensive union effort in furniture, newspapers and printing was matched by organizational tries with more traditional industries. Unions waged 4,337 manufacturing election campaigns in 1977 (45.7 percent of the total) and won units with 119,860 manufacturing employees. This figure represented 53.6 percent of all the employees that unions won the right to represent in 1977. Thus, the lion's share of the union movement's organization energies is stubbornly focused on a contracting market segment.

Transportation and Public Utilities

Though transportation and public utilities did not lose jobs during the period 1966-1976, as did manufacturing, the sector achieved little growth, and was well below the overall level of 25 percent for job gains. The position of unions in this sector is consistently strong; so strong, in fact, that in certain areas further organization is virtually impossible.

Despite their already entrenched position in this area, unions gained more than 25,000 new members through organization in 1977. In terms of major industrial categories, this area and services are the only divisions in which unions won more campaigns than they lost. Unlike services, union performance was not buoyed by a strong showing in a single category, but was consistent throughout. Unions won more elections than they lost in four of the six classifications and, in the other two, their winning percentage was over 47.5 percent. One of these was electric, gas, and sanitary systems where the unionization is 25-50 percent, lower than other groups in the division. Unions gained representation rights for over 5,000 new employees in this area last year, picking up 77 new units with an average size of 72.7.

Mining

Employment in mining has undergone a cyclical swing—from the highs in the 1920's and 1930's of over a million workers to a low of slightly over 600,000 in the 1960's. For the past ten years, however, mining employment has grown at roughly the same rate as the rest of the economy and is now up to 850,000.

The United Mine Workers followed the decline but not the recovery. In the late 1930's, John L. Lewis' union represented 600,000 miners, over 70 percent of mine employees. Today the membership figure of 220,000 is slightly more than one-fourth the total employment figure. The decline in United Mineworker control of production has been even more precipitous; in 1972, Mineworker members accounted for 70 percent of all coal production; today the figure is 50 percent.

Much of the explanation for this lies in the UMW's historic commitment to a single national contract, which is heavily oriented toward conditions prevailing in the Eastern coal fields. As the mine work force in the Western fields is considerably younger than the labor pool in the East, it has less interest in pension benefits and is not prepared to sacrifice wage demands to that end.

As a result, other unions are moving into the territory. In the West, the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) represents approximately 1,000 miners in Montana, Wyoming and Colorado, and has defeated the UMW in a number of organizing campaigns. The Teamsters have had some success in mining—picking up six new units in 1977—and are universally conceded the Alaska coal fields, which may soon be a large labor market. Finally, the United Steelworkers (an off-shoot of the UMW) has long had a strong position in the so-called "captive mines"—those operations that are part of steel production.

By some standards organizational efforts were fairly successful in the mines in 1977. Unions won 33 out of 88 elections for a percentage of 37.5. These drives netted nearly 3,000 new members with an average unit size of 90.4, the highest of any industrial classification.

* * *

In assessing the growth or lack of growth segments, it becomes apparent that unions are zealously pursuing vanishing markets.

- In the Federal Government unions have reached a plateau from which further increases are unlikely.
- Unionism has declined as a force in construction due to the proliferation of double-breasted contracts.
- Manufacturing holds promise in the publishing, printing and furniture areas. Union efforts have been vigorous in these categories and have met with some success in the furniture classification. As a group, manufacturing remains the focus of the most intense union interest, even in industries where the positions of unionism is already very strong and where the size of the work force is contracting.
- Transportation and public utilities was the unions' most consistently successful division from the standpoint of organization in 1977. This segment, however, is small, and already heavily saturated, so despite the appeal of unionism to this group there are not a large number of potential members that could be recruited in this area.
- Mining may actually have ended a long period of decline and be entering a growth phase. The industry's major union has not been able to exploit this opportunity, but other unions are doing so.

UNIONS: GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS

The same type of analysis—that is, market potential and relative union strength—can be applied on a geographic basis. When unions are looked at in this light, the results are remarkably similar to analysis by industry.

Of course, because of the diversity of regional industries, the same criteria for low and high union concentration are not appropriate. Rather, for analytical purposes, more than 25 percent is high and less than 25 percent is low. On that basis, the nine major geographic regions can be slotted in the four categories shown in the diagram.

Union Election Record by Geographic Segment, Employment Growth, and Union Concentration, 1977 (Election Won-Lost Record and Average Unit Size in Parentheses)

Employment Growth 1966-1976	UNION CONCENTRATION High (above 25%)	UNION CONCENTRATION Low (below 25%)
High (above 30%)	Pacific (873-1059, 45.2%, 37.1)	South Atlantic (372-457, 44.9%, 62.7) East South Central (231-301, 43.4% 102.1) West South Central (231-340, 40.5% 86.5) Mountain (203-231, 46.8%, 50.3)
Low (below 30%)	Mid-Atlantic (746-782, 48.8%, 55) East North Central (1032-1153, 47.2%, 59.4)	New England (247-323, 43.3%, 61.5) West North Central (358-414, 46.4%, 46.1)

As the table shows, winning percentages are roughly comparable throughout the different regions of the country, but the unit sizes vary widely. Closer examination by states confirms this view. A comparison of five right-to-work, high employment-growth states with low union membership levels (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Texas) with the six states where over half the union population is concentrated (New York, Pennsylvania, California, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois) reveals little difference in winning percentages for 1977. Indeed, the record for the two groups of states is close to the national average of 48 percent. There is, however, considerable variance as to unit size. In the states where current union density is low, the average unit won was 65.8, over 30 percent above the national average for 1977. In the six states where the union population is heavily concentrated, the average unit won was only 47.2 employees, below the national average of 51.3. This comparison is highlighted by focusing on California and South Carolina: The winning percentages were virtually the same in both states, but in South Carolina the average win netted 225.7 new members, in California only 40.1.

Despite the compelling evidence that certain markets are more likely to be profitable than others, union organizing efforts are not focused intensively on any region or state. During 1977 slightly under 1 percent of the organizable workforce (nonagricultural workers who are not currently represented by a union) voted in an NLRB election. The proportion was not above 2 percent in any state, and no significant pattern emerges as to where it was high and where it was low. Alabama, for example, a Southern right-to-work state, had the highest percentage of its unorganized work force involved in NLRB elections (just under 2 percent) while South Dakota had the lowest (roughly one-quarter of 1 percent). New York, a state with a very high level of union membership, was below the national average. Regional anomolies appear; Connecticut has one of the highest employee exposures to NLRB elections, neighboring Rhode Island one of the lowest.

This evidence indicates that unions are devoting roughly the same effort to high- and low-yield states and they have no coherent national marketing policy. Some of the reasons for this failure are:

• Jurisdictional problems—despite many years of professed concern about the subject, unions have not yet resolved the issue of which union has jurisdiction over what work. Some unions cannot even determine which of the various locals within the national organization has jurisdiction over certain kinds of work. Nearly 25 years after the AFL and CIO merged in an attempt to end jurisdictional quarreling, the problem is worse than ever. Since their expulsion from the AFL-CIO in 1957, the Teamsters, for example, have recognized no jurisdictional boundaries and have attempted at one time or another to organize virtually every industrial classification. Teamster organizational success casts light on AFL-CIO ossification. An aggressive Teamster business agent (and there are reputed to be a good many of them) can organize any craft, industry or occupation. An enterprising business agent of an AFL-CIO union can get into trouble with the international president and/or the AFL-CIO for organizing within the jurisdiction of another member union. All this despite the fact that the other union does not want to organize that particular shop: It just does not want anyone else to organize it.

• The AFL-CIO and the various union internationals are powerless to establish a coherent national organizing policy. Even if the federation and/or certain internationals were to establish marketing targets in high-yield geographical areas, it would still be up to the business agents and memberships of the locals in these particular regions to implement these marketing decisions. Where they receive no cooperation, the AFL-CIO and the internationals, including independents like the Teamsters and the United Automobile Workers (UAW), do not have the same options as a large corporation; they cannot fire the local business agents and replace them with someone from national headquarters who has a mandate to pursue the new organizing policies aggressively.

These factors vitiate any real parallel between corporate and union marketing strategy. Yet the figures indicate that recruitment policy may well have a greater bearing on union potential for obtaining new members than the easier organizing procedures in the proposed labor law reform bill. Perhaps this is what William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists, meant when he was asked to comment to the *New York Times* on union plans to take advantage of the new legislation: "We will do the same thing we do all the time, except we will win for a change"(February 24, 1978).

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